

Tips for Filling out SF 278, Public Financial Disclosure Report

The following is a list of tips to help avoid common mistakes in filling out SF 278s:

For all Parts - If you have nothing to list in a Part, check "None." Form reviewers are required to contact filers to verify that they meant "None" if nothing is listed and the box is not checked.

Personal Information Block

Reporting Status: Be sure to mark whether you are a new entrant (i.e., a first time SF 278 filer), an annual filer, or a termination filer.

Signature: Be sure to sign the form. If you fill the form out an electronic version, print the form and then sign the hardcopy.

Assets and Income

FOR ALL ASSETS – check the blocks to indicate the value of the asset and the type and amount of income, including any non-taxable income. Refer to the examples printed on the form.

Retirement Accounts- Do not list your Thrift Savings Plan. For any other retirement accounts that allow you to pick the investments, you **MUST** list the underlying assets. For mutual funds, this means giving the fund family name and the specific name of the fund. These accounts include, but are not limited to: 401(k)s, 403(b)s, IRAs, and any other defined contribution pension plans.

- **Correct:** "401(k) - Fidelity Magellan"
 "IRA- American Century Value Fund class A"
- **Incorrect:** "Fidelity funds"
 "American Century"

Note that certain underlying funds may be categorized as "Excepted Investment Funds," due to their characteristics (i.e., widely held, publicly traded or widely diversified, and independently managed). This means that filers are not responsible for listing the stocks within those funds, but must still list the complete name of the funds. If you indicate that an asset is an Excepted Investment Fund, you do not need to indicate the type of the income, but must provide its value and the amount of income even if the account is tax-deferred.

Annuities- Give name of annuities and state whether fixed or variable. If variable, list the underlying assets such as mutual funds.

Insurance- Give name of company and type (whole, universal, or variable). If variable, list the underlying assets such as mutual funds.

Brokerage or other Investment Accounts- You must list or provide a printout of all the underlying assets in these accounts. This includes 529 education plans.

Trusts- You must list the underlying assets of a trust in which you have a vested beneficial interest, even if it is uncertain when your right to possession will begin. This reporting requirement includes situations in which you are the grantor of a revocable living trust and you have present legal rights to the trust, property or income.

Private Limited Partnerships- You must list or provide a printout of all the underlying assets held by a private LP.

Transactions

Be sure to indicate the transaction type, the date of the transaction, and the amount.

Gifts, Reimbursements, and Travel Expenses

Do not list travel paid for by the U.S. Government or given to the Government in connection with your official travel.

Liabilities

Do not list your mortgage on your primary residence.

The extensive instructions preceding the form and the summary instructions on each page of the form explain in detail how the SF 278 should be filled out. If you have any questions, please consult with one of the ethics attorneys on my staff, at (202) 358-2465 or via email to: ethicsteam@hq.nasa.gov.